

Renewal Recipient

Graduate Fellowship Reference Manual

**1997-98
Academic Year**

Please read and retain for reference.

*You are responsible for complying with all
policies and procedures in this manual.*



Grant Services Branch

P.O. Box 510621
Sacramento, CA 94245-0621
(916) 445-0880

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This manual contains important information on the use and retention of your Graduate Fellowship. You are responsible for all of the materials contained within. Please read this guide and retain it for future reference.

When writing the Student Aid Commission, please include your name, Social Security number, phone number and address. Obtain a U.S. Postal Service Certificate of Mailing. Retain a copy of your letter to verify mailing by any appropriate deadlines.

General and Appeal Mailing Address

California Student Aid Commission (CSAC)
Grant Services Branch
Attn: Appeals Unit
P.O. Box 510845
Sacramento, CA 94245-0845

Form and Information Correction Mailing Address

California Student Aid Commission (CSAC)
Grant Services Branch
Attn: Operations Unit
P.O. Box 510621
Sacramento, CA 94245-0621

If you change your permanent mailing address, you must immediately inform the Commission's Operations Unit. The Commission is not responsible for mail not received from or by you. Please forward your mail if you are away from your permanent address.

Telephone/FAX

(916) 445-0880; FAX (916) 327-6599

Hours

Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.- 4:55 p.m., Thursday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:55 p.m. (The Commission cannot accept collect calls).

Internet Access

<http://www.csac.ca.gov>
E-mail: custsvcs@csac.ca.gov

General Information

Your Graduate Fellowship is subject to the conditions outlined in this reference manual. Your award amount is subject to 1997-98 state budget appropriations. Your award amount is also subject to revision based upon the information provided on your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You must comply with all the instructions in this manual. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal of your fellowship and a requirement that you repay any fellowship funds you may have received. If you have any questions not covered by this manual, contact the Commission by phone or at the general mailing address.

If your Graduate Fellowship award is withdrawn for any reason during the 1997-98 academic year, the award will not be renewed for the 1998-99 academic year. To apply as a new applicant, you must file a FAFSA with parental information, a GPA Verification Form, and submit appropriate test scores by the March 2 deadline.

School Changes/Other Corrections

1. **School change:** You must notify the Commission immediately, in writing, or on the Recipient Change Form if you do not attend the school listed on your renewal letter. Be sure to include the effective date of the school change. The new school must be eligible to participate in the Graduate Fellowship program. Contact your financial aid office or the FAFSA processor at 1-800-4-FED AID (1-800-433-3243) for instructions on forwarding FAFSA information to your new school.

NOTE: Your financial need will be reevaluated if you change your school choice or residence plans. If your expenses are reduced because of a change, your fellowship may be withdrawn. *Under no circumstances are you allowed to receive payment at two schools for the same or overlapping terms.*

2. **Name or address change:** You must notify the Commission immediately if your name or address is different from the one on your renewal letter or on other Commission correspondence you receive.

3. **Social Security number:** If the Social Security number printed on your letter is not correct, submit a copy of your Social Security card so we may make corrections on our system.
4. **Less than half-time:** If you fall below half-time enrollment at any time, you must inform the Commission immediately. See the section on Leave of Absence Policy.
5. **Withdrawal:** If you wish to decline your fellowship, use the Recipient Change Form. Your withdrawal discontinues your eligibility for this school year and is irrevocable. Contact the Commission if you have any questions on declining your award. Declining a Graduate Fellowship will not affect your eligibility to compete for future awards.

Failure to properly notify the Commission of your correct school, less than half-time attendance status, name, address, or phone number changes may cause your award to be withdrawn.

Additional Awards

You must notify the campus financial aid office immediately if you receive awards from other sources. If your combined awards reduce your estimated need, the Commission may reduce or withdraw your Graduate Fellowship.

If you receive any other assistance that may be used only to pay your tuition and/or fees, you will not be able to receive funding from both programs in excess of your tuition and fees.

Requirements of the Graduate Fellowship Program

- Be a resident of California.
- Be a U.S. citizen, permanent resident, eligible noncitizen, or have an INS status which legally allows you to establish domicile in California.
- Enroll in and attend an eligible California school in 1997-98.
- Have financial need at an eligible California school.
- Maintain no less than half-time enrollment.

- Not be in default on a student loan or owe a grant repayment.
- Demonstrate intent to become a college or university faculty member.
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined by the school.

The Commission will withdraw your Graduate Fellowship if you do not meet these criteria.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirement

You must make satisfactory academic progress (as defined by your school) to receive your Graduate Fellowship. Should your school report that you have failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress, your award will be suspended. If you do not clear your academic status within three consecutive semesters or four consecutive academic quarters, your Graduate Fellowship will be withdrawn.

Use of a Graduate Fellowship

Graduate Fellowships may be used only for tuition and fee expenses at eligible California colleges and universities which are accredited by a regional accrediting association recognized by the United States Department of Education. Law schools must be accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Program Eligibility

Your Graduate Fellowship may be renewed annually for up to four years of full-time attendance. Your program eligibility is determined by the length of your graduate or professional course of study (e.g., if you are enrolled in a two-year master's degree program, you would be eligible to seek renewal of your fellowship one time). The Commission considers appeals from students to extend eligibility due to extenuating circumstances which prevent them from completing their degree in the normal time period, but not beyond four years. If you attend law school, your award may be renewed up to two times for study toward the juris doctorate (this totals three years of eligibility toward the J.D.).

A recipient's program eligibility is measured by the Commission as a percentage of a full-time academic

year of payment. One academic year of payment, or 100% program eligibility, is the equivalent of two full-time semesters or three full-time quarters of payment. A student with three years remaining in their program would receive 300% program eligibility; a student with four years remaining would receive 400%. Each term for which the Commission records payment reduces the student's total program eligibility.

Award Amounts

Fellowship awards vary based on financial need, school cost, maximum authorized award levels, and the availability of state funds.

Fellowship awards are based on full-time attendance for one school year. If enrolled less than full-time, the payment may be reduced. Awards at year-round schools are paid over 11 or 12 months.

Graduate Fellowships for the 1996-97 school year were \$100 to \$6,490 at independent schools and colleges, \$100 to \$1,669 at the University of California (UC) and \$100 to \$882 at the California State University (CSU).

NOTE: Payment advances are made to the school to be disbursed to eligible students. Check with your school for information on when, where and how payments will be made.

Payments for Summer Attendance

If you plan to enroll in non-mandatory summer courses for the Summer of 1998 and wish to receive Graduate Fellowship funds you must notify the Commission's Grant Services Branch in writing no later than May 30, 1998. We will notify you if funds become available for summer awards. Please include your name, address and Social Security number, and the name of the school you plan to attend.

Summer Graduate Fellowship payment amounts are based on the regular school year fellowship and may not meet all summer tuition/fee charges. Summer payments will reduce your total program eligibility for Graduate Fellowship benefits. You must be enrolled at least half-time to be eligible for summer payment.

If you cannot attend a required mandatory summer term, you must request a leave of absence. Otherwise, your fellowship will be withdrawn.

Leave of Absence Policy

Graduate Fellowship recipients who are not enrolled at least half-time at an eligible school must request a leave of absence from the Graduate Fellowship program. If you do not notify the Commission directly of your absence from the Graduate Fellowship program, your award will be withdrawn. If your school reports partial or full payment for a term for which you eventually request a leave of absence, your program eligibility for future benefits will be reduced.

You may obtain total leave time from the program for no more than one academic year, as defined by your school. In exceptional situations, extensions may be granted on an appeal basis only. Leaves may be requested in writing, or by filing a Grant Record Change Form for Students (G-10). The G-10 can be obtained from your school, directly from the Commission, or by downloading it from the Commission's World Wide Website. You may also ask your school, report a leave of absence on your behalf.

If you enlist in the United States Armed Forces, including the Coast Guard, you may have your fellowship deferred for up to five years. Please request this deferment in writing.

Renewal of Graduate Fellowships

Near the end of each academic year, you will be sent a letter indicating your eligibility to renew your award or announcing the end of your fellowship program eligibility. If you change your program or advance to a higher degree program, you may receive an extension of eligibility. In this event, have your school send a letter requesting extension of your fellowship indicating the new length of your degree program. In no event can a Graduate Fellowship recipient receive more than four years (400%) of payment.

You must have all 1997-98 terms accounted for by either receiving payment or requesting a leave of absence. If you do not meet this requirement by

September 30, 1998, your fellowship will be withdrawn.

Loan Default/Grant Repayment

California law prohibits the payment of Graduate Fellowships to any individual who has failed to repay a federal or state grant if required, or who has previously defaulted on a student loan and has not made satisfactory repayment arrangements. The Commission requires six consecutive and satisfactory monthly payments toward any defaulted student loan to reestablish eligibility. *Consecutive* means one voluntary payment each month for six months and *satisfactory* means paying the amount due by the due date. You must continue to make satisfactory payments to maintain eligibility for financial aid. If payments stop, you permanently lose eligibility for further Graduate Fellowship and federal loans.

Your fellowship will be withdrawn if it is determined after activation that you owe a grant refund or are in default on a loan for which you have not made satisfactory repayment arrangements.

Appeal Process/Graduate Fellowship

If your fellowship is withdrawn or you wish to dispute your fellowship status, you may appeal your status to the Commission. To appeal the status of your fellowship you must submit a written request prior to any deadline given in any correspondence sent to you. The Commission will perform a thorough review of your appeal and provide a written response of the outcome.

If you wish to appeal your financially ineligible status, contact your school to discuss your appeal. Any changes to your financial situation must be submitted to the Commission by your school. Such changes might include using 1997 income projections or 1996 income or asset revisions. No financial change requests received directly from a student will be considered.

Fellowship status appeals should be mailed to the "appeals" address provided at the beginning of the manual.